

DMD meeting notes

February 3, 2005

Old Business

Ron Thomas, OA/OIT, distributed information compiled by MOREnet showing Web page counts for various state agencies. These figures will be used to determine the Google search appliance parameters and pricing. The counts were performed about six or eight weeks ago, so may be somewhat outdated. Several agencies noted that they had launched new Web sites or performed significant cleanups of unused pages since that time. Ron also noted that some smaller agencies may not be represented on the page he handed out. However, Google has indicated that once the appliance is installed and begins crawling state Web sites, we will have a more accurate count. If that count is significantly different, Google is willing to discuss new pricing within about 30 days of installation.

Ron reported that the purchase of the appliance is moving ahead. Dan Ross, the new CIO, has agreed to purchase the service outright for the first year. In succeeding years, OIT will work out some type of cost-sharing among agencies. They hope to have the purchase finalized in March.

Kay Dinolfo reported on ITAB actions at its last meeting. Among the items of interest to web developers were the discussion of Google, MOTEC's move to its East Elm location, the change in name for the VB User Group (now the Windows Developers Group), and the GIS conference planned for later in February.

Kevin Lanahan reported that the Web Standards group is preparing to meet again. When the accessibility section is redrafted, he will post it in the Sandbox for members' review.

New Business

Kay announced that the CSS class that had been discussed on mo-web was now open for enrollment at MOTEC. Those interested may sign up through their training coordinators.

She also noted that several pages are still out there under the "state.mo.us" URLs. Steve Owens, SDC, said he could provide a list of these pages. She urged everyone to make sure these were changed.

Open Discussion

During open discussion, Debbie Boeckman of DNR said she has done some research into IT consolidation efforts in Michigan and Florida. She made handouts available from the Michigan Web site, where look and feel standards were actually established.

Cory Fischer from DED noted that their department had recently launched a new Web design. He said that Tier Technologies had assisted DED in installing SiteCore, a content management system.

Gail Carroll from the Gaming Commission asked whether anyone had opinions about purchasing a content management solution. Discussion followed regarding different agencies' approaches.

Steve Owens reported that the SDC is looking at making changes to the firewall on Services because of recent intrusion attempts. They will be looking at shutting down some ports. Members asked that SDC please send notification before ports are closed so that we can be aware as the testing proceeds.

Peggy Davis, AGO, asked whether others had experienced slowness in FTPing.

Bobbie Koelling, DESE, invited members to use their installation of Jaws for Windows for testing pages and applications.

Debbie Boeckman asked if anyone had an inexpensive way for liaisons to make PDFs. She mentioned a free PDF writer and asked if it were a worthwhile product. Cory said he had used it, and it works, but it definitely has no frills. Josh Bullock, MDC, said that their staff is working on a server side solution and should have something they can share with Debbie in the next couple of months.

Debbie asked Steve Owens whether there was additional discussion about moving away from Majordomo for listservs. Steve said there was not.

Kevin mentioned the CSS class and said he hoped it would meet our needs. If not, DMD may try to get another class together. He asked whether there were other topics that members might want to see at MOTEC. Some of the possibilities included Macromedia Contribute; accessibility of Web applications; learning tableless layout; and how to redesign a Web site.

Some members were interested in the next meeting of the Windows Developers Group. We will try to find out when the meeting is and publicize it.

Keith Townsend, DED, asked whether we were planning another DMD conference. Kevin said he thought that would be a good idea, but that we needed to make sure we have a good solid topic around which to plan. He thought that a fall presentation might be possible. Alternatively, we could wait another year. In any case, he asked members to send in any ideas they had for topics.